Mian language

Mian is an Ok language spoken in the Telefomin district of the Sandaun province in Papua New Guinea by the Mian people. It has some 3,500 speakers spread across two dialects: *West Mian* (a.k.a. *Suganga*), with approximately 1,000 speakers in around Yapsiei, and *East Mian*, with approximately 2,500 speakers in and around Timeilmin, Temsakmin, Sokamin, Gubil, Fiak and Hotmin.[2] Phonologically, Mian is very similar to other Papuan languages in the size of its phoneme inventory, but it nevertheless has some peculiarities, such as its contrast between a plain [a] and a pharyngealized [aˤ]. It is also a tonal language.

Mian	
Native to	Papua New Guinea
Region	Sandaun province, Telefomin district
Ethnicity	Mianmin
Native speakers	from 1,400 (2000 census)[1] to 3,500 (2007)[2]

Language family	Trans–New Guinea
	• Central & South New Guinea ?
	 • Ok
	  • Mountain
	   • **Mian**

Language codes	
ISO 639-3	`mpt` – inclusive code Individual code: `sug` – Suganga
Glottolog	mian1255 (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/mian1255)[3]

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Phonology

Vowels

Mian has 6 vowels, including the pharyngealized open front vowel.

	Front	Back
	Unrounded	**Rounded**
Close	**i** /i/	**u** /u/
Close-mid		**o** /o/
Open-mid	**e** /ɛ/	
Open	**a** /a/ **aa** /aˤ/	

And 4 diphthongs:

Ending with /i/	Ending with /u/
ai /a͡ĭ/	**au** /a͡ŭ/
ei /ɛ͡ĭ/	**ou** /o͡ŭ/

/ɛ/ is realized as [ə] in word-initial low-tone syllables, [ɛ] elsewhere.

/a/ is realized as [ɐ] in unaccented syllables, [ə] in word-initial low-tone syllables beginning with a consonant, [a] elsewhere.

/o/ is realized as [ɔ] in word-initial low-tone syllables and in syllables ending in a voiceless <u>plosive</u> or [ŋ], [o] elsewhere.

/u/ is realized as [ʊ] in word-initial low-tone syllables, [u] elsewhere.

Consonants

Mian has 15 <u>consonants</u>:

		Bilabial	Labiodental	Alveolar	Palatal	Velar		Glottal
						Plain	**Labialized**	
<u>**Plosive**</u>	<u>**Voiceless**</u>			**t** /t/		**k** /k/	**kw** /kʷ/	
	<u>**Voiced**</u>	**b** /b/		**d** /d/		**g** /g/	**gw** /gʷ/	
<u>**Nasal**</u>		**m** /m/		**n** /n/		**ng** /ŋ/		
<u>**Fricative**</u>			**f** /f/	**s** /s/				**h** /h/
<u>**Approximant**</u>				**l** /l/	**y** /j/		**w** /w/	

/b/ is realized as [ᵐb] word-initially, [pʰ] or [p̚] syllable-finally, [b] elsewhere.

> Examples: **banǒn** [ᵐbànǒn] *lower arm*, **mǎab** [mǎˤːp̚] *frog*, **tebĕl** [tʰɛbĕl] *ant*

/t/ is realized as [tʰ] before vowels, [tʰ] or [t̚] syllable-finally.

> Examples: **tam** [tʰàm] *temple*, **mát** [mát̚] *gall bladder*

/k/ is realized as [kʰ] before vowels, [kʰ] or [k̚] syllable-finally, sometimes [x] between vowels, [qʰ] before [aˤ].

> Examples: **kemin** [kʰèmìn] *to do*, **manggĕk** [màŋgĕk̚] *bee*, **okok** [òxòk̚] *work*, **kaawá** [qʰàˤwá] *steel axe*

/g/ is realized as [ᵑg] word-initially, [g] elsewhere.

> Examples: **gát** [ᵑgát̚] *mole*, **manggĕk** [màŋgĕk̚] *bee*

/gʷ/ is realized as [ᵑgʷ] word-initially, [gʷ] elsewhere.

> Examples: **gwaán** [ᵑgʷàán] *spider*, **gwalgwal** [ᵑgʷàlgʷàl] *twins*

Tones

Mian has 5 tonemes:

Tone	Example
Low	**am** [àm] *house*
High	**án** [án] *arrow*
Low-High	**ǎm** [ăˤːm] *Pandanus species*
High-Low	**hâs** [hâs] *hat*
Low-High-Low	**aam** [àˤːm̂] *older sister*

The tones of Mian are very complex, as they are subject to various phonological processes, and furthermore, they can be used for indicating various grammatical aspects, especially in connection with verbs, where the tones are crucial for understanding.

Consider the two verb forms below, being non-hodiernal and imperfective respectively:

dolâbībe [dòlábíbè] *I wrote*
dolâbibe [dòlábìbè] *I am writing*

Nouns

Large objects in Mianmin are feminine, while small objects are masculine.[4]

(1)

*imen-**e***
/taro-**M**/
'small/one taro'

(2)

*imen-**o***
/taro-**F**/
'large taro/large quantity of taro'

References

1. Mian (https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/mpt/) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
   Suganga (https://www.ethnologue.com/18/language/sug/) at *Ethnologue* (18th ed., 2015)
2. Fedden, Olcher Sebastian (2007). *A Grammar of Mian, a Papuan Language of New Guinea* (http://epubs.surrey.ac.uk/792225/) (PhD thesis). University of Melbourne. hdl:11343/39327 (https://hdl.handle.net/11343%2F39327).
3. Hammarström, Harald; Forkel, Robert; Haspelmath, Martin, eds. (2017). "Mianic" (http://glottolog.org/resource/languoid/id/mian1255). *Glottolog 3.0*. Jena, Germany: Max Planck Institute for the Science of Human History.
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Digital resources

- Fedden, Sebastian; Timothy Feist; Matthew Baerman; Greville G. Corbett; Gunter Senft (2015). *Mian and Kilivila Collection* (http://www.smg.surrey.ac.uk/collection). University of Surrey. doi:10.15126/SMG.30/1 (https://doi.org/10.15126%2FSMG.30%2F1).